

The Affordable Housing Committee of the Town of Fairfield supports proposed Bill # 6880 sponsored by our legislators – Rep Kupchick, Sen Hwang & Rep Devlin.

The Town of Fairfield strongly supports the creation of affordable housing; in fact , two affordable housing developments were established in 1984 and two more in 1986. And in 1988, prior to the enactment of Sec. 8.30g, a comprehensive plan was published and the Affordable Housing Committee was established to implement the plan.

The committee continues initiatives to increase the number of affordable housing units, as evidenced by the following documents submitted:

1. In November 2014, the Town implemented an updated Affordable Housing Plan – DIVERSIFYING FAIRFIELD’S HOUSING PORTFOLIO . This long-range Plan sets out 11 action steps for the creation of affordable housing. At this time, the committee has completed 3 steps, and is moving forward toward completion of a fourth.

2. We were successful in amending two ZONING REGULATIONS which were approved by Fairfield’s TP&Z in Sept 2015:

- The first amendment addresses inclusionary zoning and requires 10% affordable units for projects of 10 units or more. This regulation was applied to a mixed-use development project now under construction with 101 apartments. As a result of the new regulation, Fairfield has created 11 additional affordable units.
- The second amendment addresses Density and Design standards which provide incentives for affordable units in designated areas.

3. A MODEL OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN REQUIREMENTS was prepared and submitted to TP&Z. This plan standardizes the submission of the affordability plan mandated by 8-30g, and is applied to 8-30g applications as well as other affordable housing developments in the community. It calls for detailed annual reporting requirements for units, and requires the preparer to certify that the information provided is accurate. This plan is now being used as a model for a newly proposed development in Town.

4. The Committee has also drafted an ordinance to establish a TOWN HOUSING TRUST FUND. This ordinance will add an additional fee to any building permit taken out in the Town. This additional fee, amounting to \$5 per every thousand dollars in building permits will be transferred to the Housing Trust Fund. The Fund will be used to assist with acquisition, rehabilitation, construction, repair and administration costs associated with affordable housing, whether for a single unit or large scale development. The proposal is currently under consideration by the RTM and other Town bodies and is receiving favorable support.

Our Committee believes that 8-30g needs to be amended for several reasons. One primary reason is to address predatory practices by developers who use the existing regulations, not for the purpose of serving low-income families, but instead are motivated purely by profit, regardless of how their

development may affect the neighborhood and the surrounding homes...and for many residents, equity in these homes represents the bulk of their retirement savings.

The committee also believes that the existing statute discriminates against our senior citizen population by making it more difficult for long-term residents to remain in our community and “age- in- place “. The statute currently fails to allot to senior citizen housing an equal number of housing unit equivalent points than to those that are attributed to family dwellings.

We as a Town and Committee are committed to creating more affordable housing in Fairfield and we will continue to move forward with our remaining action plans in that pursuit.

Respectfully,

Robert Frigo

Cynthia Sammarco

Co-chairs

Town of Fairfield Affordable Housing Committee